



---

# Announcing the First Members of the Oversight Board



**T**oday, the impact of social media on people's lives is hard to grasp. This can often be positive. As the world lives through a global health crisis, social media has become a lifeline for helping people and communities to stay connected.

At the same time, we know that social media can spread speech that is hateful, harmful and deceitful. In recent years, the question of what content should stay up or come down, and who should decide this, has become increasingly urgent for society. Every content decision made by Facebook impacts people and communities. All of them deserve to understand the rules that govern what they are sharing, how these rules are applied, and how they can appeal those decisions.

The Oversight Board represents a new model of content moderation for Facebook and Instagram and today we are proud to announce our initial members.

## The Board will take final and binding decisions on whether specific content should be allowed or removed from Facebook and Instagram

The Board will review whether content is consistent with Facebook and Instagram's policies and values, as well as a commitment to upholding freedom of expression within the framework of international norms of human rights. We will make decisions based on these principles, and the impact on users and society, without regard to Facebook's economic, political or reputational interests. Facebook must implement our decisions, unless implementation could violate the law.

## The Board brings together unique insights and



The four Co-Chairs and 16 other Members announced today are drawn from around the world. They speak over 27 languages and represent diverse professional, cultural, political, and religious backgrounds and viewpoints. Over time we expect to grow the Board to around 40 Members. While we cannot claim to represent everyone, we are confident that our global composition will underpin, strengthen and guide our decision-making.

## Board Members are independent from Facebook

All Board Members are independent of Facebook and all other social media companies. In fact, many of us have been publicly critical of how the company has handled content issues in the past. Members contract directly with the Oversight Board, are not Facebook employees and cannot be removed by Facebook. Our financial independence is also guaranteed by the establishment of a \$130 million trust fund that is completely independent of Facebook, which will fund our operations and cannot be revoked. All of this is designed to protect our independent judgment and enable us to make decisions free from influence or interference.

## The Board will review content referred to it by both users and Facebook

When we begin hearing cases later this year, users will be able to appeal to the Board in cases where Facebook has removed their content, but over the following months we will add the opportunity to review appeals from users who want Facebook to remove content.

Users who do not agree with the result of a content appeal to Facebook can refer their case to the Board by following guidelines that will accompany the response from Facebook. At this stage the Board will inform the user if their case will be reviewed.

The Board can also review content referred to it by Facebook. This could include many



We aim to make this process as swift and accessible as possible, ensuring that language, location, expertise or context are not obstacles.

Although we cannot make a decision on all of the many thousands of appeals we expect to receive from users, we will prioritize cases that potentially impact many users, are of critical importance to public discourse, or raise questions about Facebook's policies.

Some content, as outlined in the [Bylaws](#), is not technically or operationally feasible to send to the board; other content is not eligible to be submitted because of legal restrictions. How we prioritize and select content will be amongst the key questions the Board will address in the months ahead.

The cases we choose to hear may be contentious, and we will not please everyone with our decisions. Facebook and Instagram users come from all corners of the world and the social or cultural context in which content is posted matters. We expect passionate discussion among Members.

## The Board was designed with transparency in mind

Transparency is an important part of holding Facebook accountable. All decisions will be made public, and Facebook must respond publicly to them. We will publish our decisions on our website, while protecting the identity and privacy of those involved. We will issue a public annual report on our work to evaluate how we are fulfilling our purpose and whether we believe Facebook is living up to its commitments.

## How Board Members were selected

Facebook led the recruitment of the four Co-Chairs, with the assistance of recruiting specialists to source qualified candidates and outside consultants to ensure fair recruiting practices. Facebook also partnered with Baker McKenzie to create a public portal where



---

Following their selection, the four co-chairs assumed responsibility for interviewing and approving the rest of the Board, in partnership with Facebook and executive search firm Heidrick & Struggles.

## The Board will begin hearing cases in the coming months

The work of the Board is commencing immediately, and we are on track to begin hearing cases in the coming months. We are still assessing how the global response to the coronavirus pandemic may impact important steps required for the Board to reach full operational capability, including recruiting staff, training Members and implementing tools essential to ensuring data privacy and security.

We look forward to serving the online community, and sharing further updates on the progress of the Board.































---

[< Back to News & Articles](#)

## Related Posts





## Preparing the Way Forward for Facebook's Oversight Board

Published on January 28, 2020

[Read More](#)



## Oversight Board Membership Selection Process

Published on September 17, 2019

[Read More](#)

[Back to Top](#)

[FAQ](#)

[JOBS](#)



---

COOKIES

Follow the Oversight Board on: